



CITY HALL PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PAT Meeting
Monday, September 12, 2005, 3:00 – 4:30 PM
Smith Tower, 500 2nd Avenue

NOTES

Present:

PAT: Cindy Bogar, Peggy Dreisinger, Laura Inveen, Neil Lukas, Tamara Menteer, Craig Montgomery, Al Poole Staff: Cheryl Fraser, David Goldberg, Victoria Schoenburg Consultants: Theresa Nalon, Jerry Ernst Guests: Kate Martin, Charlotte Taylor

Public Comment

- Kate M. Commented that she was following this and other downtown park projects. Hoped that the PAT would be “thinking outside the box” and consider programming more active uses. Noted that the area surrounding the park lacked activity and that there were no reasons really to go to the park. The immediate area was not comfortable for her.
- Charlotte T. Noted that she used to go to the park for lunch every day, but no longer did so because of the lack of security. She goes to the privately-owned Waterfall Park where there is a security person.

Summary of Last Meeting, *Cheryl Fraser*

- Cheryl reviewed themes from last meeting, noting four themes.
- Cheryl stated that staff had received approval to seek a PAT member with experience being homeless.

Park Programming, *David Goldberg*

Review of Conceptual Programming Options – David G. reviewed the “Programming Models” and asked the PAT for comments on whether the models provided sufficient variation, for guidance on the preferred model, and specific recommendations for changing the preferred model.

- NL – Options look good. Could combine Options 1 and 2 since they are compatible and none of one options elements would interfere with the other option’s elements.
- CF – Clarified that the skatescape option was a plaza that would be built to facilitate skating, but would also look great and function for skate boarding.
- CM – Pointed out that skateboarding on Yesler was problematic because of the speed and the damage they caused to the historic light prisms.
- CB – Expressed that property owners were investing money in the district’s historic elements and wanted to preserve them. She wasn’t sure that encouraging skateboarding was compatible with preserving historic elements. Cindy also requested clarification about the role of a homeless representative on the PAT. David and others clarified that the person would likely have experience being homeless and could add the perspective of that experience to the PAT.
- NL – PAT may also want to refine options by identifying what they don’t want as well as what they do want.
- CF – Parks is looking at different models for maintenance / management with the Downtown Parks and Open Spaces task force. She noted that crews make three visits a day to City Hall Park and that downtown parks require a lot more intensive maintenance.

- LI – Noticed that City Hall Plaza has a guard. AP stated that these were NW Protective Services staff hired to provide security at City buildings. She wondered if guards could be used to provide security.
- CF - Clarified that sleeping is allowed in parks, but not camping, which is defined as having a shelter such as a tent.
- DG – Stressed the difference between enforcement of regulations and people's sense of security which may have more to do with comfort around homeless people.
- CB – People, especially tourists and workers do make judgments based on perceptions and simply talking about what is illegal won't be sufficient to attracting more people to the park.
- AP – Wouldn't support a predominantly single-user park such as the skate-scape idea. It wouldn't reflect the users and neighborhood. He has spoken with homeless about the park and related several comments. The row of benches along Jefferson is not a good idea, benches could be in outward-facing groups. The trees are nice, but the grass area could be reduced. There is a strong feeling the no one is watching the park and therefore anything can happen.
- TN – The park would be best is it was at a crossroad of activity and had activities that drew people to it. She referred to the Project for Public Spaces article "What Makes a Successful Space?"
http://www.pps.org/topics/gps/gr_place_feat?referrer=homepage_features
- PD – The Downtown Parks Task Force is working on a specific code of conduct for downtown parks. This will address "antisocial" activities that contribute to negative perceptions about safety, and should be used in City Hall Park.
- NL – Along with several other PAT members commented on the need for a concierge or security guard that monitored the site.

Discussion Draft – Programming Model

The PAT favors exploring a model based on integrating Options 1 and 2. The following is a combined Model that incorporates PAT comments. It has not been adopted as a preferred model. It is used for discussions purposes and will be reviewed at the public meeting on September 29.

Active, Neighborhood-Oriented Park

The park will meet the needs of residents and workers in the area. Residents include artists and families such as those found at the Tashiro – Kaplan as well as the temporary and transitioning residents who live at the Frye, Morrison and other nearby buildings.

The Park will be a visible gateway to downtown that presents a positive image to visitors.

- The park will be active 16 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Destination that is comfortable for workers, families, teens, elderly neighbors, tourists and especially women.
 - Used by surrounding employees for lunch
 - Destination for tourists
 - Safe for homeless who use nearby services and shelters and transitional housing
 - Sought out by residents for active and passive recreation
- Well-connected to Pioneer Square, Occidental Square and transit.
- Active on the edges on parks.
- "Active" elements are geared to be self programming.
- Clean.
- Visually striking site when people come out of the tunnel or drive by.
- Park entrances convey that you are guest in a special, cared-for space.
- On-site concierge or guard.

Possible Improvements The desirability and viability of these elements are for illustrative purposes only, and will be assessed during schematic design. Other design considerations such as connections to adjacent areas, internal circulation, landscaping

- Mix of green and hardscape:
 - Green space could include small lawn areas and formal garden areas
 - A plaza could provide opportunity for small scale events, exhibits and concerts.
- Formal activity areas:
 - Bocce courts, chess tables
 - Basketball hoops
 - Small scale skateboard features
 - Children's Play area
 - Small dog off leash area
- Concessions ideas:
 - Bookseller kiosks;
 - Food vending (possibly managed by FareStart)
 - Associated movable seating and tables
- WI-FI
- Perimeter fencing
- Fixed and Movable seating
- Public art

Potential Partnerships (For illustrative purposes only. The specific potential partnerships will not be listed at the public workshop since it would not be appropriate to “commit” someone without extensive discussions.)

- PSCA:
 - To raise community awareness and assist with balancing community desired improvements.
 - To market and manage events that are coordinated with those at Occidental Park and Mall.
- Residents:
 - To use the park and create ownership (adopt a park?)
- Service Providers – To consider providing outreach in the park to contact and service clients. (This will require considerable discussions with providers since some a working to bring clients off the street to access services.)
- King County – To assist with concierge / security and cleaning (adopt a park?)
- DSA / MID – programming activities, cleaning. concierge

Management Implications

- Intensive period of transition to promote change in uses.
- Cleaning and setting up chairs and tables.
- Will require active enforcement if community use increases.
- Support for community initiatives.
- Periodic programming requires sponsorships partners for activities.
- Particularly strong enforcement during evenings and weekends when workers and tourists are gone.

Next Steps

- Public Workshop September 29 from 5 to 6:30pm at Tashiro / Kaplan